



FIRE WATCH REQUIREMENTS

An Assistant State Fire Marshal may require a building owner to provide a fire watch if a fire protection system fails, if there are an excessive number of accidental activations or nuisance alarms, or a special circumstance or event. Personnel to conduct the fire watch are determined by the building owner. A professional security company is not required.

Definition of a Fire Watch

The assignment of a person or persons to an area for the express purpose of notifying the fire department and/or building occupants of an emergency, preventing a fire from occurring, extinguishing small fires, or protecting the public from fire or life safety dangers.

Owner Responsibilities

- a) Establish, instruct and maintain fire watch personnel.
- b) Notify the fire alarm monitoring company.
- c) Notify the local Fire Department and the Division of Fire Safety Regional Office that the system is not working and again when the system has been repaired.
- d) Contact the repair company to fix the fire protection system(s).
- e) If a Notice of Violation has been written, contact the Asst. Fire Marshal when the system has been repaired.

Personnel serving as a fire watch have the following duties:

- a) Conduct periodic patrols of the entire facility as specified.
- b) Identify any fire, life or property hazards.
- c) Notify the Fire Department if a fire is discovered by calling 9-1-1 with the exact address and type of emergency.
- d) Notify occupants of the facility of the need to evacuate. If the sirens or public address function of the alarm system are still functional, use them to assist with evacuation of the building.
- e) Determine at least one means of direct communication with the Fire Department. A telephone or radio is acceptable.
- f) Maintain a log of fire watch activities.
- g) Have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers.
- h) Fire watch personnel cannot have other duties besides their assigned fire watch. However, the Fire Department may designate other duties.

Note: The fire watch will not perform fire-fighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen.

Requirements of the Vermont Fire and Building Safety Codes

NFPA 101 - 9.6.1.6 Where a required fire alarm system is out of service for more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period, the authority having jurisdiction shall be notified, and the building shall be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all parties left unprotected by the shutdown until the fire alarm system has been returned to service.

Frequency of Inspections

Fire watch personnel should patrol the entire facility every 15 minutes in the following situations:

- a) The facility has people sleeping.
- b) The facility is an institutional occupancy.
- c) The facility is a occupied assembly occupancy.

Facilities that do not meet the requirements for a 15-minute patrol frequency should have a fire watch patrol every 30 minutes.

Record Keeping

A fire watch log should be maintained at the facility. The log must be available at all times during the fire watch.

The log should show the following:

- 1) Address of the facility.
- 2) Times that the patrol has completed each tour of the facility.
- 3) Name of the person conducting the fire watch.
- 4) Record of communication(s) to the Fire Department and monitoring company.
- 5) Record of other information as directed by Fire Department personnel.

Cancellation of Fire Watch

It is the owners' responsibility to cancel the fire watch once the fire protection system has been fully restored or after the end of the special circumstance or event.

Once the fire watch has been cancelled, the owner or representative must notify the monitoring company, and the local Fire Company.